**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A viral vector containing at least one essential viral gene or gene element under the control of an inducible promoter.

2. The viral vector of claim 1, wherein said inducible promoter is a yeast GAL4 promoter.

3. The viral vector of claim 1, wherein said vector is derived from adenovirus and contains an adenoviral origin of replication.

4. The viral vector of claim 3, wherein the essential viral gene or gene element is selected from the group consisting of E1A, E1B, E2, E4 and E5.

5. The viral vector of claim 3, wherein at least one viral gene or gene element is deleted therefrom.

6. The viral vector of claim 5, wherein the deleted viral gene or gene element is selected from the group consisting E1A, E1B, E2, E3, E4 and E5, wherein said essential viral gene or gene element and said deleted viral gene and gene element are different.

7. The viral vector of claim 6, wherein at least two viral genes or gene elements are deleted.

8. The viral vector of claim 7, wherein said deleted genes are E1A and E1B.

9. The viral vector of claim 7, wherein the E3 gene also is deleted.

10. The viral vector of claim 4, wherein said essential viral gene or gene element is E4.

11. The viral vector or claim 9, wherein the E2 gene also is under the control of an inducible promoter.

12. The viral vector or claim 11, wherein the E5 gene also is under the control of an inducible promoter.

13. The viral vector of claim 1, wherein said inducible promoter is selected from the group consisting of the auxin inducible promoter, tet-responsive element and an ecdysone hybrid response element.

14. The viral vector of claim 3, further comprising a heterologous gene.

15. The viral vector of claim 14, wherein said heterologous gene is under the control of a promoter active in eukaryotic cells.

16. The viral vector of claim 15, wherein said promoter is CMV.

17. The viral vector of claim 16, further comprising a polyadenylation signal in operable relation to said heterologous gene.

18. The viral vector of claim 17, wherein said polyadenylation signal is selected from the group consisting of adenovirus, SV40 and bovine growth hormone.

19. The viral vector of claim 15, wherein the heterologous gene is selected from the group consisting of a tumor suppressor, an antisense transcript, a vaccine antigen and a single-chain antibody.

20. The viral vector of claim 19, wherein said tumor suppressor is selected from the group consisting of p53, RB, APC, DCC, NF-1, NF-2, WT-1, MEN-I, MEN-II, BRCA1, VHL, FCC, MCC, MMAC1, zac1, p16, p21, p57, p73, p27, C-CAM and BRAC2.

21. A cell comprising a heterologous gene encoding at least a first factor that induces a promoter that is capable of activity in eukaryotic cells.

22. The cell of claim 21, wherein said first factor a fusion polypeptide of VP16 and a fusion partner.

23. The cell of claim 22, wherein said fusion partner for VP16 is selected from the group consisting of GAL4, tet repressor, ecdysone receptor and auxin.

24. The cell of claim 21, wherein said factor is a fusion polypeptide of the estrogen receptor hormone binding domain and a fusion partner.

25. The cell of claim 24, wherein said fusion partner for estrogen receptor hormone binding domain is selected from the group consisting of GAL4, tet repressor/VP16 fusion protein, ecdysone receptor and auxin.

26. The cell of claim 25, further comprising GAL4 fused to VP16.

27. The cell of claim 21, further comprising at least one viral gene or gene element essential to the replication of the corresponding virus.

28. The cell of claim 27, wherein said viral gene or gene element is an adenoviral gene selected from the group consisting of E1A, E1B, E2, E4 and E5.

29. The cell of claim 28, wherein said adenoviral gene is E1B.

30. The cell of claim 29, further comprising the E1A gene.

31. The cell of claim 30, further comprising the E2 gene.

32. The cell of claim 28, wherein said adenoviral gene is E1A.

33. The cell of claim 21, further comprising a gene encoding at least at second factor that induces a promoter that is capable of activity in eukaryotic cells.

34. The cell of claim 33, wherein said second factor is a fusion polypeptide of VP16 and a fusion partner.

35. The cell of claim 33, wherein said second factor is a fusion polypeptide of the estrogen receptor and a fusion partner.

36. A method for producing an infectious, conditionally replication-defective viral particle comprising:

(a) providing a cell comprising a heterologous gene encoding at least a first factor that induces a promoter that is capable of activity in eukaryotic cells;
(b) contacting said cell with a viral vector, said viral vector comprising at least one essential viral gene or gene element under the control of a promoter that is induced by said first factor and inactive in the absence of said factor;
(c) culturing said cell under conditions permitting the uptake of said viral vector by, and replication in, said cell; and
(d) harvesting said infectious virus particle produced by said cell.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein said cell further comprises an essential viral gene or gene element and said vector lacks a functional copy of said essential viral gene.

38. The method of claim 36, wherein said viral vector comprises a heterologous gene.

39. The method of claim 36, wherein said viral vector is derived from adenovirus and contains an adenoviral origin of replication.

40. A method for producing a protein in a cell comprising:

(a) contacting said cell with an infectious viral particle, said particle comprising a viral vector comprising

(i) at least one essential viral gene or gene element under the control of a promoter that is induced by said first factor and inactive in the absence of said factor;
(ii) a heterologous gene, and

(b) culturing said cell under conditions permitting the uptake of said particle by said cell and the synthesis of the product of said heterologous gene in said cell, said conditions not including said first factor.

41. The method of claim 40, further comprising the step of isolating said product.

42. The method of claim 40, wherein said viral vector is derived from adenovirus and contains an adenoviral origin of replication.